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BY- SHERRY, P.H., ED.

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THIS JOURNAL CONTAINS SPEECHES ON RACE RELATIONS AND THE NEGRO'S STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL POWER. WHITNEY YOUNG DISCUSSES "THE SEARCH FOR LIBERALS" WHO WILL NOT BACK DOWN WHEN CONFRONTED BY ANGRY NEGRO DEMANDS FOR INDEPENDENCE AND EQUALITY. BAYARD RUSTIN ANALYZES TRENDS IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND CONCLUDES THAT THE MOVEMENT'S CURRENT FOCUS IS ON ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE FOR THE NEGRO AND THE ELIMINATION OF POVERTY. "POLITICAL POWER AND SOCIAL REFORM IN THE GHETTO" IS THE TOPIC OF A SPEECH BY PAUL L. PURYEAR. FINALLY, IN AN EDITORIAL BY CLIFTON H. JOHNSON, "HUMAN RELATIONS FRONTIERS" ARE DISCUSSED. THIS DOCUMENT IS THE "COUNCIL JOURNAL," VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3, DECEMBER 1967. (LB)

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W. A. Hotchkiss, General Secretary
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P. H. Sherry, Executive Secretary
& Editor
W. Q. Marr, II, AMA Consultant
& Photographer

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EDITORIAL

HUMAN RELATIONS FRONTIERS

Clifton H. Johnson

Director Amistad Research Center
& Race Relations Department
United Church of Christ

The founding of the Annual Institute of Race Relations at Fisk University, in 1944, was a reaffirmation of the historical commitment of the American Missionary Association of the belief that the development of attitudes and behavior necessary to the improvement of human relations is amenable to the processes of education. The Institute had its beginning at a time when wartime idealism and the rising expectations of American minority groups were combining with dislocations, relocations, fear, hysteria and frustrations to force a reappraisal of the American creed which has produced a revolution in race relations in the United States. During the years, the Institute has endeavored to serve and shape that revolution by finding constructive theories on which to base programs of reform and at the same time promote understanding to relieve the tensions of change.

The Twenty-fourth Annual Institute, held this year from June 26 to July 8, registered 161 participants who came from twenty-six American states and from abroad. The theme "Human Relations Frontiers . . ." was developed by twenty-four lecturers and in three clinics devoted to studying the problems of church and race, employment opportunities for minority groups, and community action. The underlying premise of all discussion was that America in 1967 is moving from the phase of the human rights revolution in which the emphasis was on civil rights to a phase which demands more far reaching social change than most Americans ever anticipated would be necessary to correct the racial injustices of our society. The civil rights phase of the revolution has affected the lives of only a few Negroes and other minority-group individuals because the overwhelming majority of them are too poor to take advantage of the public facilities it has desegregated. While the legal structure of Jim Crow has been destroyed, inequality of opportunity remains a reality throughout America. Therefore the goals of the phase of the human rights revolution in which we now find ourselves must be equal economic opportunity, integrated and quality education, open housing for all, and better housing for the poor.

During the two weeks they were together, the Institute participants sought to get at the facts necessary for an evaluation of old methods and the formulation of the new strategies and techniques required in dealing with the complex socio-economic problems of today. Recognizing that moral concern and goodwill alone are not sufficient for producing the required social changes, a major interest was the exploration of the possible means by which a national political commitment might be forged for providing the economic resources for eliminating poverty and making quality education and decent housing available for all citizens. The assumption that the changes could result only from a national commitment was a rejection of the various separatist movements of today which are challenging the basic principles of Christian brotherhood and American democracy. In the final analysis, the Institute of Race Relations has never been primarily concerned with race or with minorities but with the future of our nation and of man.

FUNDING FULL CITIZENSHIP

Bayard Rustin

Executive Director
A. Philip Randolph Institute

I want to do three things: first, to analyze the merits of the contention that the civil rights movement is dead or in confusion; second, on the basis of that analysis, to point up how and why the problem of civil rights has changed in the last five years; and third, if the premises which arise out of points one and two are defensible, what should be the direction of our future strategies.

Since the founding of the NAACP in 1909, we have gone through three distinctly different periods. The first and longest period, which I shall henceforth refer to as the first period, ran from 1909 to 1954; the second period ran from 1955 to 1965; the third period we are just entering. I shall refer, therefore, to the period from 1965 to the present as the current period. Needless to say, when one is evolving strategy and tactics, the tactician is aware that a division into three periods is fundamentally an analytical tool to determine direction; he knows that in actual fact these periods overlap. But he must be aware of the center of gravity in order that both tactics and strategy will be clearly understood.

In period number one, from the founding of the NAACP until 1954, the single fundamental objective was to establish in the courts that "separate and equal" was not equal. The leadership of the NAACP permitted nothing to deter it from going into court to file brief upon brief until the 1954 decision established under law that any form of segregation was unconstitutional. If the symbol of the first period was a lawyer with a brief case going into court, the symbol of the middle period was people marching in the streets. There is a fundamental relationship between these two periods, because no effective protest could have occurred—Montgomery could not have occurred; Selma could not have occurred; the sit-ins could not have occurred—had not the Supreme Court decision of 1954 been the platform which freed the Negro people and their white allies to protest. The year 1965 marked the end of this second period and the beginning of the third—the period of politics. I want to analyze why this has occurred and why the second period is at an end.

First: In the middle period we were dealing fundamentally with problems which exclusively affected the Negro. This is no longer true! The battles for open accommodations, open theaters, open libraries, open swimming pools essentially have been won. We are now confronted nationwide with problems of housing, schools, and jobs, which, although most grievously affecting the Negro, affect also the 67 percent of the poor in this country who happen to be white. This new situation has obvious strategic implications. When one is dealing with problems which exclusively affect the Negro, then protest can do two things: it can call attention to and can destroy an evil simultaneously. When enough young Negroes and their white allies willingly sat and sat and sat at lunch counters, in swimming pools, at libraries, in parks, if they had courage, perseverance, and the willingness to go to jail, they accomplished their goals. But there is no way that any mass of people, short of revolution, can deal with the problems of housing or schools or jobs through protest. Protest can call attention to the fact that an evil exists but it cannot bring forth new institutions.

Second: In the middle period, if you had asked average intelligent Americans, "What is the most crucial social problem America faces?", most would have said: "Civil rights." Today, however, the same individuals are apt to reply: "Viet Nam." The national consensus and dynamic which made the protest movement meaningful has disappeared. It is not a question of "backlash," as some would have us believe. It is a basic psychological change, and any responsible strategist better understand this clearly.

Third: In the middle period he who walked most, who got arrested most, who was brutalized most, had to emerge as a common and central symbol of the movement and that was Martin Luther King. This is at an end because neither Dr. King nor anyone else in America—black or white—can become the symbol for the newer period of political struggle into which we are moving. I do not mean to take any credit away from Dr. King, whom I adore. We simply are living in a different time. In the middle period, identity of interest was manifest. Every Negro wanted the right to use hotels, swimming pools, restaurants, etc. But when you attack the problems of housing, schools, and jobs, basic differences of view regarding political

and social philosophy are bound to emerge. A. Philip Randolph and I believe that the Negro can make no further progress in this nation without the socialization of our institutions. But this places us in conflict with many other Negro leaders who look upon this position as foreign to the American system, perhaps even communistic. Therefore, this period will witness great conflict, with much side-taking, and thus no one charismatic symbol.

Fourth: In the first period one needed to be a trained lawyer; in the middle period one needed courage and perseverance. My, how Negro leaders sprang up overnight by the thousands! All one had to do was to go and sit somewhere and get arrested a few times, and he was automatically a leader. The period demanded only a philosophy of faith. The fact that intellectuality was absent during the middle period is evident in that no important book or piece of music was written by any young Negro from 1955 to 1965. In a period, however, when one is talking about strategy for eliminating slums, or creating adequate schools, or finding jobs, a philosophy of faith is not enough. To it must be added a philosophy of history, an analysis of our society's economic structures, and a sociology of social change. Further, one must have the ability to examine and walk one's way through the complicated problems of political alliances. Therefore, it is my opinion that most of the leadership which provided only perseverance and courage is profoundly useless for the present period. This opinion has pertinence when one analyzes the left wing of the Negro movement, which is not interested in a philosophy of history. This group contends that any Negro over thirty-five cannot be trusted, thus rejecting not only history but also themselves and their forebears. The same leadership which was so valiant in helping Negroes join the middle class now turns around and denounces as a traitor anyone who is able to join the middle class. Instead of engaging in politics, they engage in social masturbation, which may give one a titillated feeling but produces nothing.

Fifth: The press. The press is interested in three things: Is it new? Is conflict involved in it? Is it sensational? From 1955 to 1965 everything done on the streets was new, had conflict in it, and was sensational. Negroes had not acted this way before. Therefore, from 1955 to 1965 the newspapers ran a blow-by-blow account of the daily action on the front page. But thinking through the problems of education is neither sensational nor new; the hundreds of committees working up and down the country to do something about slums cannot be dramatic; the work which is being done all over the country by people who are trying to get jobs for Negroes is dry as dust compared to the drama of a Birmingham bus boycott. Therefore, the newspapers do not print it. In this third period we cannot count on the kind of support from the press which would make the movement for us. We have the tedious and irksome work of building organization ourselves.

Sixth: Until the Supreme Court Decision of 1954 and the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, we could not have a basic class struggle in the Negro community. We were all too busy concentrating on caste to permit the class struggle to emerge. But once the segregation foolishness is lifted off the Negro people, a class struggle does emerge—one similar to that which has emerged in all other groups in this country. This phenomenon explains the action of the young men in Watts when they called Martin Luther King and me "house niggers," or when they said, "Why don't you go back to New York? You have nothing to tell us, baby. You made it. If we are all equally as smart and you made it and we didn't, it is because you are a house nigger for whitey and he permits you to make it. But we stand out here telling him like it is, and he won't let us make it." It explains the vicious attacks on Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young, the NAACP and the Urban League. A class struggle has emerged which is now intermeshed with the older caste struggle. The implications of this new struggle for organizing people are significant. It means that even if Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young spent $5,000,000 next year to organize the ghetto, they could not do it. It is not a question of whether they want to, or whether they can put the right people there. Rather, in this kind of struggle, the only leadership which ultimately is trusted is the caste leadership which the people know. But the moment that this caste leadership is elected by them, it has become middle class and can no longer be trusted. I am not joking! Every Negro who goes from the ghetto to anti-poverty board is suspect before his second meeting.

Seventh: In the first two periods, the dynamism of the period and the organizational will was created by Southern brutality. The Negro leadership never had to organize any marches. The dogs, Bull Connor, lynching, the bombing of churches, the killing of children congealed the Negro community and the white consensus. The reaction was not the result of a positive program; it was a positive reaction to a negative thing that was being done. The boys are now too smart. We are not going to have—South or North—the same kind of extended brutality again. This means that instead of depending on brutality, we now have the tedious educational organization job of putting forth concrete, objective, achievable programs for the first time in our history.

This is truly a new period. The old period was one of hope: We shall overcome; We shall never turn back; Freedom now! The present period, in contrast, at least for many, is one of disillusionment. Many believe this society is not going to act. A society which can engage in war in Viet Nam, oppress the Negroes, and tolerate poverty is a society which does not mean to move. I went to Stokely Carmichael not many months ago with a very important project in which I wanted him to go into four major cities and to lead young Negroes in carrying two signs. The first was to read "WE DO NOT WANT RELIEF," to confront the myth which contends that all Negroes want is a handout; and the second, "GIVE US WORK," to back up by demonstration the aims of the Freedom Budget. Stokely's response can be paraphrased as follows: This society is so corrupt it does not mean to give Negroes freedom. Therefore, to have program, to project program, is to mislead Negroes. All the program you need is to "give them hell," to reveal to Africa and Asia what a corrupt society we live in, and to hope for revolution. Che Guevara becomes my hero, Castro becomes

"Moment of Man" Richard R. Benda

The present period, at least for many, is one of disillusionment

my hero.

Eighth: From 1955 to 1965 the federal government did not expend one penny, except for police protection, for basic Negro objectives won in that period. The federal government must now spend, according to the Freedom Budget, $185,000,000,000 in the next ten years, or the Negro people will not advance. There are great numbers of people, white and black, who marched in Washington for Negro dignity on August 28, 1963, but who had no basic concept of what dignity means. They assumed that once legislation was enacted, freedom would descend from heaven. But true freedom must first be conceived in economic categories. The economy is the bone, the social institutions are the flesh, the political institutions are the skin which grows on that bone and flesh. Ultimately, all human freedom is determined by the economic structure of the institution. Many people who marched in Washington were for Negro freedom, but when they are asked to support a guaranteed income or a two-dollar minimum wage, they shy away, not understanding the intimate relationship between economics and freedom.

If the above analysis is true, how can we characterize the present period? First, the civil rights movement is not dead. The NAACP has more members now than ten years ago; it has much more money than ten years ago; it has several hundred more chapters than ten years ago; Whitney Young of the Urban League is now manipulating a budget almost three times that of ten years ago. There are thousands and thousands of Negroes in the ghettos trying to do something about their condition, many more than there ever were at the time of the march on Washington. The movement is not dead! It is simply confronting a much more complex issue—the basic contra-

dictions inherent in our society. It is much easier to confront prejudice in this society than it is to ask the same society to change its economic priorities and to provide for the poor. From the very beginning we have fallen into the same trap Thomas Jefferson fell into. Jefferson awoke one night after a bad dream, in which he had seen the Republic being torn apart by slavery, and did a very noble thing. He took a piece of paper and manumitted his slaves on his death—a great moral act. But an inadequate one! He should have arisen, manumitted his slaves, and then, on the basis of that moral act, attacked the problem economically, and gone into Congress and fought for the elimination of slavery. We are still acting like Jefferson. "Oh, if only white people would be nice." Ministers preach every Sunday telling white people they ought to be friendly. The fact of the matter is, prejudice is always with us, in blacks and whites.

If society is constructed in one way, prejudice is able to rise to the surface and be socially and politically organized. If, on the contrary, society, particularly its economic life, is organized in another manner, prejudice can be reduced to an irreducible minimum. Martin Luther King's assailants stoned him in Chicago last December, not fundamentally because they were prejudiced, but because they were living in a society where there were inadequate jobs and inadequate housing for everyone. Given such conditions, it takes but two or three potential Hitlers to organize dissatisfied people to throw stones. This probably could not have occurred if full employment and adequate housing were realities in Chicago. Both Negroes and whites have to accept the fact that the basis of prejudice is economics and stop all this foolishness about psychology. The struggle before us is a human rights struggle to eliminate poverty, bad housing, and inferior schools.

Let me proceed to specific strategies. If Stokely Carmichael and his ilk believe that this society is going to do anything special for Negroes, they are profoundly mistaken. I understand how bad white folks can be perhaps better than they do, and therefore I ask for nothing special for Negroes. With this in mind, I ask that we press for two basic economic commitments: an immediate two-dollar minimum wage and guaranteed employment. A small businessman might question the first commitment: "Well, Mr. Rustin, I would be put out of business; I only have five employees and I couldn't afford to give it to them." Our reply must be: "We will have the government examine your business. If it is or can become socially useful, we will ask the government to subsidize you in order that you can pay these men a minimum wage, in the same way that the government subsidizes Mr. Harriman's railways and the nation's farmers. But you better have a business that is worthwhile."

Look at the "war" on poverty. This so-called war picks up a piece of string here, and a little piece of scotch tape there, and a little spit here and makes a nice little paper wrapping. The approach is basically wrong! We do not need paper wrappings, we need a new package. If a little Negro child benefits from Head Start, fine, but this is not the answer. We take some boys from street corners and send them to the Job Corps, at the same time that the Job Corps states that 50 percent of the boys they train cannot find work. I could have told them that the very day it started. Or we can create bands for the children to play music, or, as Mayor Lindsay is planning in New York City, we can send Shakespeare to the ghetto. I oppose none of these programs as such, but note this. In 1910 a Moynihan Report could have been written about the Italians: they were all criminal, all carried stilettos, all were involved in crime and broken families. In 1900, an even more vicious study could have been written about the Irish: they were called "Shanty," which meant "white nigger," and characterized as filthy, dirty, and unintelligent. Their families were also said to be disorganized. But, as the family heads of both these groups were permitted to gain economic independence, the problems in their communities and family life gradually disappeared. The same thing will happen when we give economic security to the heads of Negro families, and not before.

What about guaranteed work, full employment? I am not talking about Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "made work," because if the government is going in for public works it must answer two questions: Are we producing something everybody seriously needs? Are we building into the program the possibility for upgrading? I do not know Robert Kennedy very well, but I would like to help the poor Senator. He announced last spring that he could no longer take his children sailing in their yacht on the Hudson because his doctors told him that the filth of the river's spray would transmit diseases. We can assist Mr. Kennedy and others who own yachts by hiring hundreds of thousands of young men to clean up every river and every streamlet in this country. We can give them the title of assistant engineer. After a three-year period, those who have the talent can be elevated to the salary of an assistant engineer, and from there hopefully proceed to the salary and title and diploma of an engineer. John Dewey and I have much in common on this issue. Dewey said, "You learn while you do." I agree, but add, "You learn while you *do,* while you are being *paid.*"

I also want to help poor Governor Rockefeller. He thinks he is rich, but he is as poor as the most deprived person on 116th Street and Lennox in New York City, because he has to breathe the same filthy air every time he comes into the city. Why do we not put hundreds of thousands of boys to the task of cleaning the increasingly filthy air in America's cities? Let us train them to be something more than people carrying other people's tools. Those who have the ability can be raised to an engineering or semi-engineering status. Or again, in every city in this country the transportation system is rotten. Why do we not put people to work improving it, or in building more hospitals, or more roads where they are needed, or more psychiatric clinics? We should put people to work building hospitals, not as orderlies who will always necessarily remain at that level, but with a possibility that over the next five years they could learn by doing to become assistant nurses at decent salaries and with diplomas.

If the civil rights movement does not concentrate basically on economic issues, freedom for Negroes in our time will never be achieved

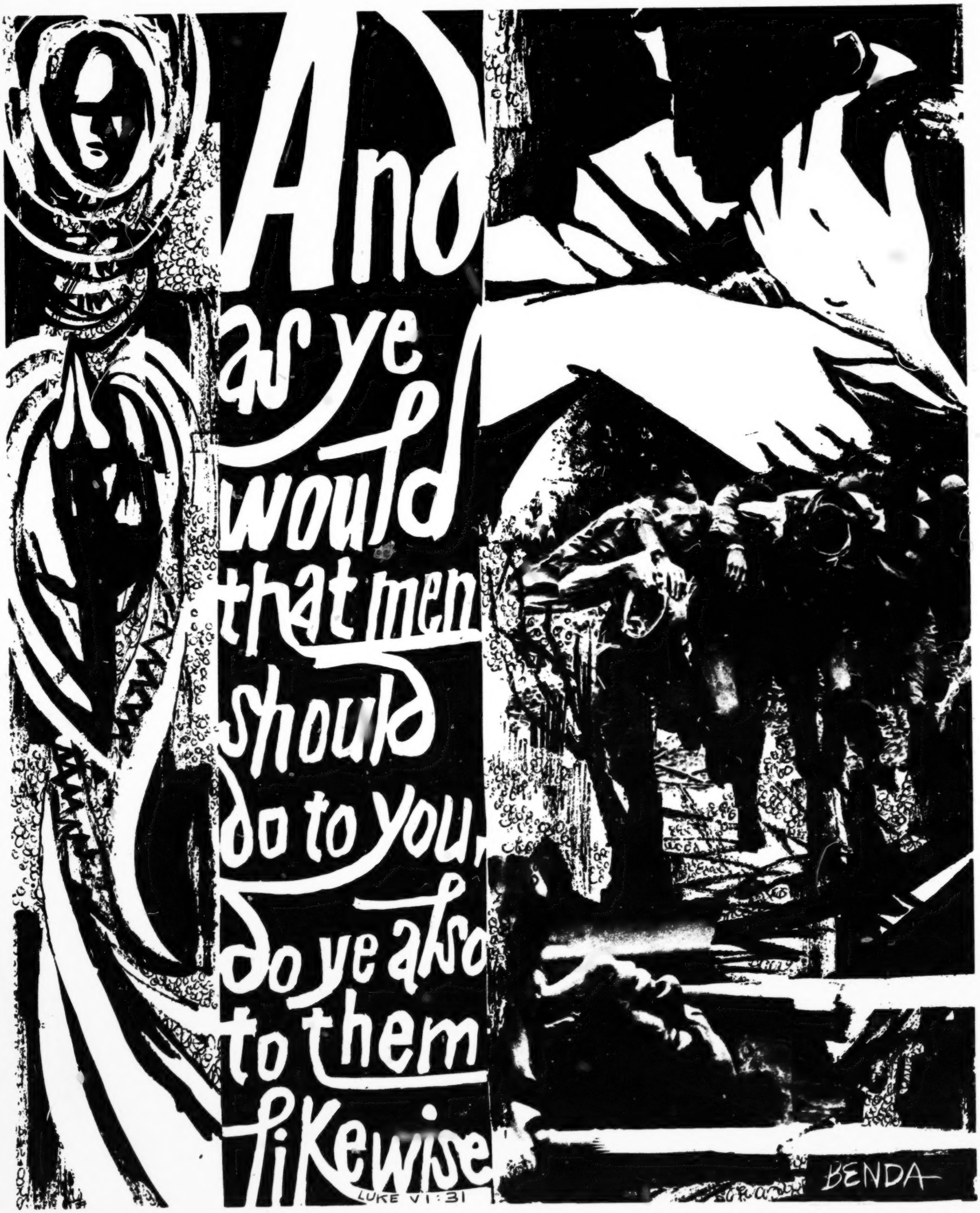
The Negro education problem will never be solved by discussions on college campuses, nor will it be decided finally in the grammar schools. Study needs to be redefined as work—something for which you get paid. The Negro youth, seventeen- and eighteen-year-old school dropouts, will not return to school. If I were a Negro dropout, seventeen, with a fifth-grade reading level, I would not return to school because I would know that, if I did, after four years my reading level would probably increase to a seventh-grade level which would mean four years of my life gone with no better job prospects than before. I will not fool these kids. The whole concept of school must change. The school must become working in the home, working in the factory, but work correlated with continuing education.

Let me conclude with two other brief items. The single most important element for the socialization and the democratization of this country is in the hands of Southern Negroes. The tragedy is that instead of Negro leaders focusing on this element, however, they are running into the North where they do not belong, do not understand what is happening, and cannot make a contribution. But if and when the remaining Negroes of the South organize themselves politically to register and vote, and when through voter education they perceive the issues, the political nature of this country will be completely changed. The Negro vote can accomplish the kind of social legislation we need, because it can drive the Eastlands and their ilk out of Congress, and thus open the door to social progress. This is a long-range task. No one will get his picture in the newspaper doing it; no one is going to jail—except in a few places—doing it; few people will get shot doing it. In short, there is no drama in it. It is irksome and tedious to transport a person from his home into a voting booth, but this is the nature of the period.

Finally, we cannot go to Congress without alliances, and alliances are not built on affection. They are built on the basis of immediate mutual interest, so that five out of six alliances must be made with people who may be an enemy the following week. I shall never forget when a group of us were in Birmingham during the Bull Connor affair and the word came that Dr. King was to meet with some of the white businessmen. Dr. King rejoiced, "Oh, this is a great occasion. We will bring up seven or eight points." I replied, "I suspect, Dr. King, that they want to bring up one point and that is, you want to get rid of Bull Connor because he is beating Negroes' heads, and they want to get rid of Bull Connor because he is bad for business. I don't think they will discuss anything else because their mutual interest with us is one thing only, Bull Connor." Dr. King said, "I think we can stretch it a little." I said, "O.K., go ahead." The group met and discussed Bull Connor, after which Dr. King said, "Now, we also want to talk about the problem of jobs for Negroes." The reply was, "Well, Dr King, since we have such a terrible problem with Bull Connor at the moment, why don't we meet next month to talk about jobs for Negroes?" The meeting never took place! Does this mean that Dr. King should not have sat down with those gentlemen to get rid of Bull Connor? No, because in a political alliance you deal on the basis that I am interested and you are interested in A, B, and C. I say to you, "Well, what about D?" And you will say to me, "I am not interested." You will say to me, "What about E?" And I will say that I am not interested. This is the way the process works.

Think of the relationship of the Negro to the trade union movement. A vicious attack by Negroes on this movement today is fundamentally stupid, because that attack is based on the behavior of the trade union movement vis-a-vis about 200,000 apprentices in the country. The largest possible number of Negro apprentices would be 20,000 young men, whereas at this moment we have 77,000 standing idle on the corners of New York City alone. I want very much to open up the building trades. In fact, I have been very successful this past year in getting 250 Negro boys into apprenticeships, but I am more concerned with the mutual interests and goals of the Negro and the trade union movement. There is no Negro ally in this country which stands firmly for an increased minimum wage, guaranteed work, guaranteed income, redefinition of work, and free and full medical care, except the trade union movement. Therefore, no matter what problems they create for us, the unions become by virtue of mutual economic aims our most fundamental allies. We need to bring an increasing number of organized and unorganized white people into the movement, because if we go to Congress without any white allies we simply will be repulsed.

The problem before us then in this third period is basically an economic one. It is economic in that the objectives of the first two periods, while not completed, are completed enough that a dynamic cannot be created around them. It is not possible for Negroes to gain economic independence unless the problem of poverty is dealt with. If the civil rights movement does not concentrate basically on economic issues, freedom for Negroes in our time will never be achieved.



"Message of the Day!"

Richard R. Benda

POLITICAL POWER AND SOCIAL REFORM IN THE GHETTO

Paul L. Puryear

Professor of Political Science
Fisk University

I would like to state the objectives of this paper at the very outset. I intend to clearly depart from the assumption of many liberals that the problem of the Negro in the United States is essentially a psychological or an attitudinal problem. I've quite frequently heard it said that if we could only convince prejudiced whites that not all Negroes are illiterate, dirty, criminal, and destructive, the race problem would solve itself overnight. Instead, I would argue with Professor Herbert Blumer that "race prejudice exists basically in a sense of group position rather than in a set of feelings which the members of one racial group have toward the members of another racial group." If Blumer's hypothesis is correct, race relations must be viewed as a set of power relations shaped not only by the attitudes and values of the parties, but by their objective social, economic, and political interests. Consequently, the outcome of any struggle for advantage will depend largely upon the political power which groups can marshall on behalf of their interests at a given point in time.

For the majority of Negroes in the United States, poverty provides the raw materials out of which political interests and political strategies evolve. Whatever political power Negroes can muster must necessarily be directed at the problems of low income, inadequate education, unemployment, poor health, and all the other social ills which, taken together, constitute the culture and environment of poverty. What I wish to do in this paper is to try to deal with the pervasive social and economic problems of the ghetto against the background of considerations of political power. I am assuming that social change is, in large measure, a resultant of political activity, and that a rational assessment of the political assets and deficits of Negroes, and their allies, is one of the indispensable steps in planning for social change.

Throughout this paper, I confine myself to the use of the term "political power," in part, to disengage myself from some of the current confusion and controversy over power and political legitimacy in the Negro community but, more particularly, because "political power" can be rather precisely defined in terms which are widely accepted by political and social scientists. Political power, as I intend to use it, connotes that measure of social energy or pressure necessary to effect a transformation in the objective condition of individuals and groups in society. And, in this paper, the focus is on the role of such power in changing the status of the Negro masses. In employing the term "political power," I am intentionally bypassing the more controversial term "black power." I do so to avoid what I have come to regard as a rather debilitating controversy, and because I have some doubt that "black power" has any precise meaning which is understood even by those who engage in the controversy. . . .

In recent months, there has been considerable public dis-

cussion concerning the acquisition and utilization of Negro political power to achieve social reform in the ghetto. While the urgency of this question seems to have arisen with Stokely Carmichael's call for "black power" in the summer of 1966, the fact is that the advancement of Negro rights has always proceeded against the background of considerations of political power. Altruism, goodwill, and morality have undoubtedly played a role in changing race relations over the last thirty years, but the success of the Negro rights movement depended primarily upon the accessibility of political power and its effective utilization. It may well be that the successful litigation of a long series of desegregation cases between 1930 and 1955 was, as Professor Pritchett has pointed out, the consequence of growing libertarian sentiments on the Supreme Courts, but these sentiments were expressed by judges whose appointments were shaped by a political environment in which the Negro vote was a more significant factor than it had been in the decades prior to 1930. Similarly, the proliferation of civil rights legislation and the growth of Negro office-holding are the symbols of Negro political strength in the North and West and, increasingly, in the South as well.

A careful examination of election statistics over the last thirty-five years reveals the increasing potency of Negro political power as a factor in winning concessions for the Negro population. To cloud the issues of legitimate power with the emotionalism which both sides bring to the "black power" controversy is, as Professor Kenneth Clark has intimated, "to interfere with the serious discussion . . . of social power . . . as a factor in the relationship among the various ethnic groups and races that comprise America."

Politics in pluralistic America is, in considerable measure, the politics of ethnic and racial self-interest. Although we commonly assume that ethnic minorities gradually lose their sense of cultural identity as they become assimilated into the larger American society, Nathan Glazer and Patrick Moynihan have shown that the ethnic melting pot never really melted. After four or five generations of aculturation, the Irish, the Poles, the Italians, the Jews, as well as other racial, ethnic, and religious groups, still think of themselves, *at least some of the time,* as belonging to a distinct group with a unique tradition to preserve and special interests to protect. An analysis of the 1960 presidential election statistics illustrates the political implications of this fact. . . . Over 85 percent of the middle-class Catholics who voted Republican in 1956 shifted back into the Democratic column to support Mr. Kennedy in 1960.

Our political history, then, establishes a clear link between politics and racial, religious, and ethnic identity. It seems perfectly legitimate and reasonable, therefore, to expect Negroes to develop and sustain political power as a means of enhancing their status in society. Power, as Bertrand Russell has suggested, is the thread running through all human relations. That the Negro cannot defend his group interests or advance the group cause without political power can hardly be denied. But an important emperical question still remains: Under what conditions and on what terms can effective power be mobilized? And I should like to direct most of my remarks to this question. But before I move to this assessment, it seems useful to try to briefly analyze the nature of the broad socio-political movements that have arisen out of the racial problem in this country. . . .

In a little noticed paper, written less than a year ago, Professor David Danzig of Columbia pointed out that a distinction must be made between the "Civil Rights Movement" and the "Negro Revolution." While these two movements are often closely related and frequently overlap, they are, to use Danzig's words, "distinct movements with different histories, constituencies, and goals." The "Civil Rights Movement" has been essentially a coalition of middle-class white and Negro liberals who viewed the Negro problem as a moral issue. The chief idealogue of this movement was Gunnar Myrdal, whose monumental study of *The American Dilemma* documented the failure of white America to honor its national creed of justice and equality. He regarded this failure as " . . . nothing more and nothing less than a century long lag of public morals." "The Civil Rights Movement" concentrated upon the removal of this lag. The main assumption was that segregation and discrimination were morally evil and denied the Negro equality of opportunity which would enable him to emerge from the vicious cycle of poverty and ignorance and be assimilated, one by one, into the larger American society. The chief goal was to secure equal opportunity for Negroes not as a self-conscious community but as individuals.

While the "Civil Rights Movement" has concentrated primarily upon equal opportunity and the assimilation of individual Negroes, the "Negro Revolution" is a movement to overcome the social, economic, and political inferiority of Negroes as a group. As Charles Silberman intimates, American society is now confronted by a Negro community which seeks to be admitted *en masse.* This, it seems to me, is the fundamental purpose of recent demonstrations, economic boycotts, rent strikes, and the increasing and unfortunate outbreaks of violence in the ghetto. The aim of the Negro Revolution is to advance the welfare of the Negro masses whose lives have been little affected by the substantial successes of the "Civil Rights Movement" in changing the legal and constitutional structure of the nation. It is also the aim of the Negro Revolution (and this should not be underestimated) to achieve psychological redemption—to free the Negro from feelings of inferiority, to release him from the socially imposed trauma of blackness, and to instill not only pride in his racial and cultural heritage but to give him confidence in his ability to control his own destiny. The increasing call for "participatory democracy" and the federal government's insistence upon the "maximum feasible participation of the poor" in its poverty programs, emphasize the growing recognition of the right of political self-determination by racial minorities, and by the poor.

To draw a distinction between the Civil Rights Movement and the Negro Revolution is not to favor one and discredit the other. Both have had substantial and indispensable in-

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"My Son, My Son!" Richard R. Benda

fluence upon the status of Negroes in this country. But it is to argue that civil rights was a peripheral moral issue until Negroes themselves emerged as a national voting bloc beginning in the 1930's. It was the political voice of the Negro, joined with that of labor and the religious and intellectual communities, that provided the necessary and indispensable leverage for the substantial successes of the civil rights coalition in achieving formal legal equality for Negroes. Franklin Roosevelt's wartime FEPC, the impressive array of desegregation decisions in the federal courts, and the growing body of civil rights legislation speak for themselves. As a durable political movement, civil rights was eminently successful.

But the Civil Rights Movement's emphasis on equality of opportunity was both a strength and a weakness. Its strength lay in its recognition that legal barriers based upon race must be removed before Negroes could improve their status. Its weakness lay in the fact that it recognized rather late that the removal of legal barriers does not simultaneously provide the means for enjoying equality of opportunity. Equality of opportunity has had little effect upon the social and economic conditions of the vast majority of Negroes. Low income, poor education, unemployment, and sub-standard housing all conspire to lock the Negro in ghettos of hopelessness and despair from which there is no apparent escape. The central and overwhelming fact of life for Negroes today is that almost 50 percent live in a state of officially recognized poverty.

The median Negro family income is $3,233 or 54 percent of the white family's $5,835. Approximately two out of every three Negro families subsist on less than $4,000 annually as compared with 27 percent of the white families. Only one out of five Negro families earns $6,000 or more, as compared with one out of two white families. And the dollar gap between Negro and white income is widening. Among the more startling indications of this is that the Negro who finishes four years of college will earn less over his lifetime than a white with only eight years of elementary school. It is this stark fact that has given rise to the Negro Revolution. In a recent comment, A. Phillip Randolph, the elder statesman of the movement for Negro rights, made this point quite clear.

"The civil rights revolution has reached a point where it is incapable of achieving any further victories because it was not structured to achieve social and economic goals such as jobs, education, and housing. These are the most important goals for Negroes today. The next stage in the Negro struggle for equality and dignity must be a social revolution. Even if racial discrimination and segregation were abolished overnight, the problems of joblessness, inadequate education, ghettos and disease would remain still. The problem now is not racial discrimination and segregation. The problem is economic exploitation and subjugation. Negroes have to develop new approaches to these problems, inventing new tactics and fashioning a fresh strategy. It means new concepts for the advancement of the black and white working poor."

By inference, at least, it seems to me that the basic point Mr. Randolph makes is that the issues which were most crucial for Negro rights in the preceding thirty years are not the most crucial issues today. Consequently, fresh assessments must be made to determine how, in a given social context, political power can be effectively amassed for the new tasks which lie ahead. I would like now to turn to that assessment.

Depending upon location and differences in the underlying political and social structure, political power can be marshalled in various ways. I would like to characterize these various forms as *majoritarian politics, alliance politics,* and *protest politics.* The first two operate through the electoral system; the last through new political forms and structures.

The nature of *majoritarian politics* is self-evident. Potentially, it can be brought into play wherever Negroes constitute a majority of the actual or potential voting population of a given governmental jurisdiction (that is, a city or a county). As a purely numerical question, this is a conceivable outlet for Negro political power in the Black Belt Counties of the South and some Northern urban centers such as Newark, New Jersey and Gary, Indiana. To date, there have been only a few working models of this style of politics to observe and analyze. In Mississippi and Alabama, mass-based political organizations responsible to Negro minorities have been organized in recent years. But these efforts to date have met with only limited success. Since 1964, Negroes in Macon County, Alabama have constituted a majority of the voting population and have possessed the formal power necessary to control politics in the county. But it is still too early to judge the outcome. Negro leadership in the county has exercised its power cautiously and, therefore, has uncertain control over the governmental process. Moreover, a clear definition of the relationship between the middle-class leadership and the masses has not yet clearly emerged. The election of Lucius Amerson to the office of Sheriff last year was the first electoral victory based upon a grass-roots appeal to the Negro masses over the heads of the established leadership. What this portends for the style and substance of politics in the county remains to be seen.

Majoritarian politics is primarily a response to unyielding white resistance or indifference to change in the status of the

However legitimate or potentially effective majoritarian politics may be:

Negro. It is not a politics of racism, but a response to racism. It is the by-product of generations of social neglect and Negro exclusion from the political process. It does not seek to subjugate the white minority or exclude it from the political process, but to assure the advancement of the social and economic well-being of the Negro population. The majoritarian style of politics places the main centers of political power in the Negro community, and those who seek to administer the government (whether Negro or white) must deal with that reality. I would suggest that this is a style of politics which will be highly visible over the next decade, particularly as the Negro percentage of the total population grows in large urban areas. Those who view this prospect with alarm need only refer to American political history. Majoritarian politics has been practiced for generations by successive waves of foreign immigrants seeking a better life. It is a form of political behavior which is now clearly legitimized.

However legitimate or potentially effective majoritarian politics may be, it is not a political strategy which can be applied universally. Nationally, the number of voting districts where Negroes constitute a majority does not exceed sixty. Inevitably, their political strength is limited by their numerical position vis-a-vis the white population and, particularly, that segment of the white population which is most hostile to the interests of the Negro community. To be politically effective, therefore, Negro political power must be merged with those elements in the white community with whom Negroes can make common cause. I call this alliance politics.

In theoretical terms, *alliance politics* is not new. Much that has been gained in civil rights legislation over the last twenty years is a by-product of a coalition of Negro and white voters. But alliance politics has been largely employed to achieve what Harvard Professor James Q. Wilson calls "status" ends rather than "welfare" ends. A "status" end seeks "the integration of the Negro into all phases of the community on the principle of equality." A "welfare" end, on the other hand, is one which looks "to the tangible improvement of the Negro community . . . through the provision of better services, living conditions, or positions." Those espousing "status" ends might see great value in the election of a Negro to the Senate, while those seeking "welfare" ends might give a higher priority to improved housing or fairer treatment of Negroes by the police and the courts.

The distinction between "status" ends and "welfare" ends became rather clear to me a few years ago when a colleague of mine did a small study of a town in the deep South where Negroes were just beginning to vote in large numbers. His

It is not a political strategy to be applied universally

major objective was to determine how different social class groups within the Negro community perceived the whole process of voting. He found sharp distinctions between upper-income and lower-income respondents in his sample. Upper-income Negroes, by and large, placed great value on the psychic or intangible benefits of voting. Their views can be fairly well summed up in the comment of one respondent that "every citizen should have the right to vote." For this individual, voting connoted "status"—status as an equal citizen in both law and practice. It embodied the personal fulfillment of what my colleague called the "Democratic Ideal."

By contrast, the low-income respondents were more clearly oriented toward tangible benefits having more immediate and direct impact upon their lives. To this group, improved housing, better education, and improved employment opportunities were the chief concerns. And, the fact that only 20 percent of the low-income group was registered to vote may suggest a certain disenchantment or distrust of the formal electoral process as an instrument for the achievement of group interests. However, as political action increasingly focuses on "welfare" goals, the base for Negro-white political alliances is likely to broaden considerably.

Alliance politics is possible under at least two sets of circumstances. First, where seemingly dissimilar groups espousing different political causes agree to merge forces to achieve agreed-upon goals. This is essentially a bargaining situation in which all the parties to the alliance agree to be mutually supportive so that all achieve the goals they seek. Secondly, where groups share some interests in common but have not, in the past, sought a common strategy and a common political effort. What is necessary in this case is to find a basis for bringing the groups together for political action. Permit me to suggest several directions in which such alliances might develop.

Conceivably, one kind of political alliance can be achieved through the merging of the civil rights movement with the peace movement. It is a rather striking fact that two years ago there was little overlapping membership in these two movements. Those who worked for civil rights tended to be inactive in the peace movement, and vice versa. Martin King's eloquent speeches in Chicago and at Riverside Church in New York linking the civil rights movement with the peace movement provide a verbal bridge for a political alliance which conceivably may develop among those who oppose war on religious or humanitarian grounds, and those who see our massive military expenditures as a deterrent to programs of social welfare for Negroes. Because so much of the idealism and action on the peace front and the civil rights front is to be found among young college and university students, this kind of alliance seems increasingly viable as the American electorate grows younger. The recent emergence of new political groupings under the general rubric of the "new politics" is tangible evidence that such an alliance is already developing.

There are also opportunities for effecting alliances among the Negro and the white poor. By various estimates, 35 to 50 million Americans live in poverty. Of this number about 20 percent are Negroes. While alliances between these groups will be difficult to effect on purely racial issues, there do seem to be reasonable prospects for cooperation on broader social and economic issues. The "Freedom Budget," which is proposed by the A. Phillip Randolph Institute of New York, calls for a rational program to end poverty within ten years. It seems that this is the kind of program which could win wide coalition support from a broad cross-section of the population, including labor and the poor.

While the precise character of Negro-white political coalitions will be shaped by a variety of factors, the empirical evidence suggests that such alliances are politically effective. It was a coalition of Negroes, trade unionists, liberals, and religious groups that staged the March on Washington, passed the Civil Rights Act, and laid the basis for the Johnson landslide in 1964. And with the expansion of the Negro electorate in the South, such coalitions will increasingly be effective in local and national politics. It is significant, for instance, to note that in 1964 the Negro vote provided the margin of victory for President Johnson in Virginia, Florida, Tennessee, and Arkansas. He lost only those Southern states where fewer than 45 percent of the eligible Negroes were registered.

In the congressional and state elections of 1966, the emerging importance of the Negro vote in the South was also observable. In Arkansas, Negro votes supplied the margin of victory of Winthrop Rockefeller over an ardent segregationist. In Alabama and Virginia, the Negro vote was decisive or near decisive in crucial senatorial races. And in South Carolina, a United States Senator and a governor were elected by margins provided by Negro voters. As one Carolina newspaper commented: "One, and only one, general conclusion appears possible: Neither party can win statewide or congressional races in South Carolina without Negro voting support."

As Negro registration and voting expands in the South, Negroes will frequently constitute the critical factors in elections at all levels. Fresh opportunities will present themselves

"Let My People Go . . ."

Richard R. Benda

for effective coalitions with more moderate whites. This will mean not only a larger hearing in city councils and state legislatures, but will lead to the gradual disintegration of the Dixiecrat wing in Congress which frequently combines with conservative Republicanism to block broad social legislation benefiting Negroes and the poor.

While I am reasonably optimistic about the growing effectiveness of alliance politics North and South, there are some difficulties looming on the horizon which ought be noted. One is the problem of fully realizing Negro voting potential. This is not simply a matter of getting most of the eligible Negroes registered (although this is important). More particularly, it is the question of how the vote can be mobilized for full expression in elections. For instance, although Negro registration has risen dramatically since the passage of the Civil Rights Act, substantial numbers of those registered do not vote regularly. In South Carolina in 1966, only about half the registered Negroes voted in the November election. The significance of this lapse is to be seen in the fact that those who remained away from the polls had almost enough votes to defeat the arch segregationist Strom Thurmond in his bid for reelection to the Senate. In Georgia and Alabama, 50 percent or less of the registered Negroes voted. And in Memphis, in the Ninth Congressional District, a drop-off in the Negro vote permitted a conservative Republican to unseat a moderate Democrat. This failure of Negroes to employ all the voting strength they have is a serious one which will have an affect upon the ability to bargain successfully with whites for political advantage.

Majoritarian politics and alliance politics operate through the traditional electoral systems. Both depend upon the marshalling of a segment of the electorate on behalf of specific candidates and specific issues which concern the Negro community.

Protest politics, on the other hand, operates outside the usual channels of American politics and seeks to achieve Negro demands through the use of a variety of forms of direct action applied at crucial points within the economic and political system. It is especially effective where other forms of political activity have not produced desired results.

In February 1965, the distinguished strategist of the civil rights movement, Mr. Bayard Rustin, wrote an article in *Commentary* entitled, "From Protest to Politics." It was a perceptive article making a strong case for the organization and rational use of the combined political power of Negroes and liberals as a decisive weight in American politics. While I thoroughly agree with his thesis, I think the title of the article was misleading. For, I would argue that "protest" *is* a form of politics. The two are not separable in the way that his title suggests. And, I would argue that this can be an increasingly effective way of generating pressure on the political system for the realization of Negro demands.

I want to stress that protest politics, as I conceive it, is peaceful and non-violent. It is to be distinguished from what Rustin calls "class agression," and what we more typically refer to as "riots" or "rebellions." While I will have more to say about the political significance of the latter phenomenon in a moment, it should be clearly distinguished from "protest politics."

Protest politics may take several forms. The economic boycott is among the more familiar forms. Boycotts have been used frequently both North and South especially to win employment concessions for the Negro. Usually, such boycotts represent direct action by Negroes themselves, but new efforts such as Project Equality dramatize the role which religious and other liberal groups can play in this sphere.

The rent strike is a more recent form of protest politics brought into vogue through the leadership of Jesse Gray in Harlem. In theory, it is an organized effort to rectify the consequences of lax housing-code enforcement by requiring the slum landlord to make improvements on his property as a precondition for collecting the rent. It may also have the indirect effect of dramatizing the laxness of public officials in enforcing the law, and thus trigger governmental action as well. This was to some extent the result of Dr. King's campaign in Chicago. As far as I am able to determine, there have not been any systematic attempts to assess the rent strike as a political tactic and, therefore, its efficacy is difficult to judge.

Protest politics can be most effective when it has a wide base of support in the community. It is necessary, therefore, to seek out issues which have wide appeal and which are significant to large segments of the population. Professor Richard Cloward of the Columbia University School of Social Work has, in recent months, been assessing the organizational capabilities of the welfare poor. In an article in *Nation* magazine last spring, he suggested that one way to force changes in the scandalous welfare system in the United States would be to place an impossible financial burden on the system by enrolling all welfare eligibles who are not currently enrolled. Admittedly, this group constitutes a sizable segment of those who live in poverty and, conceivably, a tactic, of this kind could be a productive form of protest for change in the existing welfare system.

What is now clearly observable is that the welfare poor are organizing for protest politics, as well as more conventional forms of political activity. The most dramatic of these efforts was the recent attempt of the welfare poor in Roxbury, Massachusetts to force change in the operation of the system in that city. The subsequent eruption of violence generally obscured the significant political fact that here was organized political activity by a group not previously organized in a self-conscious way.

The organization of the welfare poor is proliferating at a rapid rate. In the last year, demonstrations and marches have been staged in New York and at least sixteen other cities protesting welfare practices. Resentment of the welfare system by the poor has been a long festering sore, and, therefore, a viable issue around which to organize political action. A great variety of demands have been put forward by the protestors. Paramount among the grievances are the inadequacy of welfare payments and the invasion of personal privacy by welfare officials. In Ohio, for instance, recipients receive only 70 percent of what the state itself has declared to be the minimum subsistance income by 1959 standards—73 cents per day per person for food, clothing and all other expenses except rent. Welfare demonstrations in that state were held last year to persuade the government to use its $30 million budget surplus to raise welfare payments to a more acceptable level.

"Snooping" by the welfare investigators is a bitter and constant grievance. Cloward reports that in Cleveland, where the police conduct many of these investigations, one of the typical tactics is to interrogate the children of ADC families about undeclared family income or the male companions of their mothers. Similar invasions of privacy occur regularly throughout the country, and welfare recipients are beginning to resist them. A recent report of a neighborhood meeting in the South Bronx indicated that many ADC mothers have publicly vowed to no longer teach their children to lie about seeing their father.

The organization of the welfare poor represents a dramatic turn in the movement for human rights. The most persistent theme of their efforts is the abandonment of the widespread practices of rejecting legitimate applicants, summarily terminating the benefits of others, and failing to provide the full benefits provided by law to those who remain on the rolls. Groups which have concentrated on these issues have shown the most dramatic growth and the most stable membership. In a number of cities such as New York, city-wide coordinating committees have been organized to maximize strength and develop broad strategy. At the national level, the Poverty-Rights Action Center has been established in Washington, D.C., to coordinate the organization of the poor across local and regional lines.

What is perhaps most significant is that the welfare protest movement is beginning to attract support from local anti-poverty agencies, church groups, and civil rights organizations. The success of this form of protest politics will depend upon such incremental support, upon the ability to recruit eligible persons to the welfare ranks who are not currently participating in the system, and upon a continuing focusing on issues which promote unity rather than divisiveness among the poor.

At an earlier point, I indicated that a clear distinction should be drawn between protest politics which is non-violent and "class agression" which involves unlawful behavior. I would like to make a brief comment about the political significance of the latter phenomenon.

In the United States, and in Western democracies generally, resort to violence to achieve political ends is not regarded as legitimate. Rather it is assumed that the bona-fide claims of competing groups in society will be adequately adjusted so that all groups will have a stake in maintaining social peace and equilibrium within the system. With the rather notable exception of the Civil War, this conception of the nature of political society has been borne out by the American experience. Violence has been regarded as dysfunctional because individuals and groups have generally received sufficient benefits from the social system to make violence unnecessary. But congregated today in the Negro ghetto are increasingly large numbers of people who perceive no effective way of mediating their legitimate claims within the political system. This is what Kenneth Clark has called a sense of "powerlessness," a feeling that one can-

not change his environment or shape his future. This sense of powerlessness is especially observable among Negro youth who are becoming increasingly alienated from American society.

Unable to manipulate the political system in traditional ways, the ghetto's alienated people see violence as *functional*—as a means of making some change, no matter how small, in the quality of their lives. And, strangely enough, violence does bring a hearing and some tangible results. The riots in Watts not only resulted in a major inquiry into the causes of ghetto disenchantment, but substantial federal funding which was funneled directly into Watts, bypassing Mayor Yorty. And even now, as we assemble here, the government is again playing its seasonal money game, shifting poverty funds from place to place to meet new outbreaks of violence as they erupt. This is the unfortunate legacy of the failure to face up to the need for political modernization in the ghetto—that is, to the need to develop political forms that can operate peacefully, rationally, and effectively within the established political system. What is needed is a complete restructuring of political life in the ghetto to make political action truly productive for ghetto dwellers. Only then will violence and "class agression" become *dysfunctional* as a mode of political expression.

What I have tried to suggest in these remarks is that the traditional civil rights movement, as we have known it, has reached a climax. This movement made very effective use of coalition politics to destroy the legal foundation of racism in the United States. But these successes are muted by the fact that the legal destruction of segregation and discrimination largely affected institutions which are relatively peripheral both to the American socio-economic order and to the reality of poverty in the lives of Negro people. The task which now lies ahead is to broaden the base of political power in the Negro community, and in the larger community, to meet new demands for employment, housing, education, and related goals. I have suggested some of the possibilities and a few of the difficulties in achieving these ends through *majoritarian politics, alliance politics,* and *protest politics,* and have pointed to the causes and dangers of functional violence as a mode of political expression.

In closing, I would simply reemphasize that group self-interest is the very core of real politics, and it is the essence of American politics. The Negro can no longer address himself exclusively to the removal of the white man's prejudice. His problems are too urgent for that. To paraphrase Booker T. Washington, he must "let down his (political) buckets where he is" and confront American society on the issue of his rights with all the political power and all the political wisdom he can muster.

SEARCH FOR LIBERALS

Adapted from the Charles S. Johnson Memorial Lecture

Whitney M. Young, Jr.

Executive Director, National Urban League

Dr. Charles S. Johnson, first Negro to become president of Fisk University, once wrote: "The essence of our system of government and life is voluntary cooperation in a democratic process that respects the dignity of individuals. Our faith in the human spirit to achieve the ends of a free society has given hope to millions of mankind over the world. We cannot default this promise. This is our moral challenge in a national crisis. . . . The issue is not how unsanitary some enforced racial slums and ghettos have become, but how to improve the health and welfare of the nation without regard to race, sex, or national origin; not how much a person thinks his property loses in value if the Negro moves into his neighborhood, but how to achieve a free market for living space for the people of the nation."

Although these words were written eleven years ago, how appropriate, how timely they are for the crisis we are witnessing today.

The Urban League has tried to resolve the racial struggle within the framework of our democratic system—being opposed to riots and violence. There are others who believe that their ends can be achieved only through violence and ultimate destruction of that system.

It is conceivable to me that, given the continued gap between the Negro and the white, the increasing disillusionment, frustration and hopelessness, more such fanatical experiences are bound to occur. It seems miraculous that we have not seen more such extreme behavior expressed in the last few years. The truth of the matter is that we have not been able to deliver to the Negro that which we have promised. And the reason why we have been unable to deliver is because we have not been given the resources with which to do this. Now is the time for those who are truly concerned and interested to appreciate the kind of risks, we, as the Negro leadership, and as Negro citizens are willing to take—and those risks are real. Those who are sympathetic to our efforts to maintain the Negroes' faith in democracy, must indicate their belief—during this most difficult period—by unprecedented cooperation.

What is happening today is no spur of the moment demon-

stration of indignation. In the early 1960's we saw many positive things. We saw Supreme Court and lower court decisions. We saw the passage of important legislation. We saw a new attitude being taken on the part of American industry and an unprecedented interest and support given this problem by the highest officials of government. Even Southerners had finally realized that with some practice N-e-g-r-o could, in fact, be pronounced as "Negro" rather than "Nigra."

We felt we were on our way, and then in 1966 something happened. In rapid succession we heard the cries of "black power" by a handful of desperate and unwise people. We heard of and saw riots occurring in cities throughout the country. We saw the defeat of a Civil Rights Bill without it ever getting to the House floor for a vote. We saw set-backs in terms of attitudes; in terms of the election of conservative candidates in places like Florida, Georgia, and Alabama; in terms of a most subtle kind of racism headed by the Mrs. Hickses of Boston and the Mrs. Gunnings of New York City—yes, we heard of their concerns about crime on the streets, the depreciating property values, and their fury concerning bussing. All of these "concerns" were usually prefaced by "we are for integration . . . why some of my best friends are Negroes." But nevertheless, we were proceeding to touch upon a most vulnerable area—an area that even the "liberal" found hard to accept—the sensitive area of the home. The "my house is my castle" slogan was twisted in strange ways in order to justify even stranger and more cruel behavior.

On the surface, the reasons for this behavior were described as the fear and disgust over "black power," and rioting. I am certain that we all know better. The truth is that liberalism seems to be related to the distance people are from the problem. And the fact of the matter is that in 1966 the problem of integration became a national issue and was no longer restricted mainly to the Southern regions.

In 1964 and 1965 we were discussing problems that were unique to the South—voting rights and public accommodation. In 1966, however, we were talking about housing and de facto segregation. We were talking about issues next door and not 300 or 3,000 miles away.

The change in attitudes which we then witnessed was nothing short of incredible. The same people who had prided themselves on sending their Rabbis, their priests, and their ministers down to Mississippi to march as proof of their commitment to liberalism were ready to censure these same religious leaders for discussing what must be done in their own communities. The problems in Birmingham were and had to be reckoned with, but the problems in Bronxville and Shaker Heights were their own business.

Many of our intellectuals and many more of our "liberal" friends snubbed our cause when we moved from the South to the North. We learned that the South had no monopoly on prejudice. When you saw those hoodlums throwing bricks at nuns in Chicago, when you saw the resentment, you would have been hard-pressed to tell that you were not in Mississippi. We were made to realize that Chicago and other Northern cities and suburban communities had no intention of accepting *any* Negro for their neighbor.

Last year brought to the surface some rather significant points. One was the fact that the old strategies that we were employing, the very things that Negroes were told would be necessary to get them into the mainstream of life, were proven to be fallacious. We learned that merely to become educated—to adopt the behavior patterns of our great white people—is not enough to open the doors into the mainstream of American society. We have seen that a Ralph Bunche with a Phi Beta Kappa Key, a Nobel Prize, and a Ph.D., cannot move into Cicero, but an Al Capone can and did. We can no longer operate on the assumption that the sheer acquisition of sophistication or college degrees makes us an integral part of the white society or the white power structure.

The fear seems to be that of upward mobility. When I say upward mobility, I mean the mobility on the part of a minority. The blame cannot be placed firmly on any segment of our population, but, strange as it may seem, on our economic prosperity. Because of this affluence, our society has developed a large number of white Americans with middle-class incomes and little formal education. These are the people who, in many cases just one generation removed from welfare, feel insecure in their newly acquired status and feel constantly threatened by the rise of the Negro. This type of person thrives on racist propaganda, often under the guise of religious teachings and now well financed by newly wealthy reactionaries.

I feel it important to point out that these same people are opposed not to the Negro alone, but to change in general. They follow the same reactionary line on questions of rent supplements, model cities, public housing, and social security expansion. They are against all things that represent social progress and thought. These people will not stop with the blocking of a Negro's entrance into their neighborhood; they'll block the Jew; they'll attack the YMCA, the school boards; they'll dictate the kind of materials and textbooks that are to be used in classrooms. Today we have a population which is vulnerable to simple solutions of complex problems—a population which is insecure.

This ought to disturb all Americans, white and Negro, but what should be of equal concern to us is the current defection of the liberal establishment from the fight. This defection is justified by the overriding problem of the war in Viet Nam. But, what upsets those of us who are down in Washington regularly fighting is that we are not fighting to get new legislation, we're simply fighting to hold on to what we've got. Many bills and amendments have been struck out or cut back by the House of Representatives in its most recent session. Appropriations for the implementation of civil rights bills are being emasculated. There are efforts being made to weaken all of our much needed programs and legislation.

It has been proven to us that for some reason the liberal does not have much stamina; but the rightist, on the other hand, finds time for all issues. He works like the devil agitating the President to bomb China and North Viet Nam,

It is possible to change attitudes —

it has been done

but he also works equally as hard to defeat all of our domestic programs. He gives equal time to infiltrating the Appropriations Committee and he outmaneuvers the "liberal" establishment to keep appropriations for domestic and foreign crisis down. The liberal apparently just doesn't have as much conviction as these people who are fighting the fellow who's moving in next door. We have one Senator in Washington who regularly expresses righteous indignation about self-determination and denial demonstrated 10,000 miles away in Viet Nam, but ignores the abuses to self-determination going on in his home city.

Despite the talk of great progress at local, state, and federal levels, there are strong forces at work that have combined to keep the basic condition of Negroes in relation to the white population relatively unchanged. The liberal establishment, in effect, is using a slingshot for a job that calls for nuclear weapons, or applying band-aids as a cure for cancer.

The Negro leaders are racing hard to keep abreast of the anger and pent-up frustrations erupting in the rat-infested ghettos of our urban areas. We are not quarreling over the issue of Viet Nam; all we are asking is, "Who in Congress—who in communities across the country—who in our power structure is fighting for and pushing for the domestic programs crucial to the Negro?" Few liberals are supporting the rent supplements, the teacher corps, and these issues have nothing to do with the money being poured into Viet Nam. We ought to be mobilizing for a guaranteed annual income, minimum wage, and expanded free public education, but on these questions there is absolutely no dialogue, and these are the problems at the heart of the civil rights struggle. It is no wonder that our people have reached a point of disillusionment with the law and the liberals. After a long struggle, we finally see that laws are passed, only to find them sabotaged and weakly implemented by the behind-the-scenes activities of established conservative groups.

To deny the justification for the anger of the Negro would be dishonest. Perhaps it lies in the willingness of America to remove the visible legal barriers to equal opportunity, but the unwillingness to provide the resources to assure it. Today's young Negro is rejecting a value system based on material *acquisition* rather than contribution or creativity. Today's young Negro is rejecting a hypocrisy which mouths platitudes on brotherhood and practices racial, religious, and class separatism and discrimination.

Recently, a white high school sophomore girl, Janis Ian, caused an uproar by writing a song entitled "Society's Child." The folk-rock song about interracial dating deals with the pressures a young girl yields to from her mother, teachers, and friends, because as the song states "Honey, he's not our kind." Despite a blanket of radio censorship, the song somehow is on its way to the top ten list. Only the pleas of a young listening audience have brought it this far—a young interracial audience sympathetic to the gap between ideals and actions.

Many of our young people today are clamoring for responsibility. But, this feeling of responsibility is too often misguided by the false liberalism and hypocrisy of their parents—the members of the adult society. In the end their futility manifests itself in militancy and rebellion.

There is unlimited debate about Stokely Carmichael, Adam Powell, or Mohammad Ali, but too many refuse to recognize, as *Life* magazine pointed out at the end of the summer of 1966, that of the 19 million Negro citizens in this country, 18,990,000 did not throw a Molotov cocktail, did not shout "kill whitey" or "black power." They bore in silence that which they have always borne—the injustices, the discriminations, with great faith and greater patience with and in the American system. But, as we all know well, for every Negro who throws a rock, one hundred are dying in the muck and mire of Viet Nam. No one mentions that for every Mohammad Ali there are fifty white American males moving to Canada to beat the draft. No civil rights bill is being passed for the hundreds and thousands of Negroes who are dying in disproportionate numbers in Viet Nam. I'll never forget what General Westmoreland said to me when I visited Viet Nam last year. His words were: "Mr. Young, I've found out three things over here, that geniuses and idiots come in all colors, that cowards and heroes come in all colors, and that nobody gets exercised or engaged in any great dialogue about open occupancy in a foxhole."

The tragedy is that it seems we must experience this kind of emergency crisis before people act decently. Many of the white servicemen I spoke with expressed more sympathy with riots and black power than some of the Negroes. The experience of hearing white men criticize a society which permitted them to grow up with superstitious notions about the Negro was unusual for me. Let us hope that these men will represent a strong liberal and positive force for the kind of legislative and local action that will be needed when they return to their own communities.

Young people, Negro and white, graduating from high schools and colleges and returning from Viet Nam, must be mobilized; and this mobilization must be organized by those with perception and mature experience. Last year the Urban League received not only greatly increased contributions from Negro citizens but business corporations as well. These industrialists and businessmen realize that either they will support responsible leadership or irresponsible leadership will take over. The struggle can no longer be generalized. In the past we

spoke glibly about the struggle between the poor and the bourgeoisie, about the coalition of labor and Negroes. Today there is no longer a nice horizontal cutting knife. Today that knife is vertical. We can find friends and enemies at all levels of the economic ladder. We cannot assume that all the business community is opposed to fair housing; the wise ones, either from moral conviction or sheer practicality, realize that the Negro population must be dispersed. The intelligent businessman knows that nothing is more foolish than to sit back and let a low-income tax user, rather than a tax producer, take over the central cities. If the present trend continues in the next ten years, ten of America's eleven largest cities will have more than a 50 percent nonwhite population. It has already happened in Washington; it will happen in two years in Newark, New Jersey; it happened last year in Gary, Indiana; it will happen in two years in Baltimore. The restlessness, the understandable militancy, and the anger have so far been fairly well contained within the bounds of the ghetto; but for how long can anger be kept within a boundary distinguished only by the color of a man's skin?

This anger must be channeled into useful action. And it is up to us as community leaders, as the educated, as members of the "middle class" to guide the course of this action which left on its own could easily head toward defeat and destruction. For all Americans the choice cannot be between separatism and integration. Unless there is cooperation between the races, we are heading straight for self-destruction and the collapse of our democratic system.

We must quadruple the number of business leaders, of government officials, of agencies, and of private citizens who are concerned and dedicated to the "national" interest rather than the "self" interest. These people must be convinced that disposition to a liberal doctrine, and the means to such a doctrine, offers a far greater possibility for a democratic and progressive nation than does a conservative form. It is not the future of the Negro at stake—but the entire nation.

The Negro is no longer satisfied with being a silent partner in the great liberal coalition, always deferring to white judgment on strategy and tactics. It is true that civil rights organizations depend on political support from white liberals and their trade unions, church groups, interfaith organizations. But, this relationship too often has unfortunate consequences, as noted by Professor James Q. Wilson in his book *Negro Politics.* Negroes tended to be "the objects rather than the subjects of civil action. Things are often done for, or about, or to, or because of Negroes, but they are less frequently done by Negroes." The Negro has long since moved away from this total dependency—in fact he resents it. He is not willing to move to the sidelines and listen to *palliatives* from the white liberal rather than the *solutions,* but he still too often appears to be in the lowly position of the grateful receiver.

If we are accused of continued reliance on the white "power structure" and constant conciliatory measures, then it is time for the liberal to do some soul-searching on his part. How many liberals, when in control, do not organize for an effective fight against discrimination? How many of these same liberals even tolerate a measure of racial discrimination within their own areas?

It was once noted that when the struggle for Negro rights moves into the street, the majority of liberals are reluctant to move along with it. They are all for the Negroes' *objectives,* they say, but they cannot go along with the *means.* The attitude of the Negro in this regard was aptly described by Bismarck when in another era he remarked, "When you say you agree to a thing in principle, you mean that you have not the slightest intention of carrying it out in practice."

And what about the liberals whose only goal is to maintain peace and comfort? What about the liberals who want change, but without upsetting the existing organizations and institutional arrangements—without trouble or turmoil? The white liberal whose ultimate goal was the one-by-one absorption of Negroes of "merit" into white society is suddenly agitated at the prospect of having to come to terms with a demanding Negro community.

The clock is ticking and it is up to us as thinking Americans to shake our well-meaning but inactive friends out of their lethargy. We must let society know that the Negro is not looking for a handout—he is looking for independence. There are Negroes who are willing and ready to serve, but we must instill society with a proper attitude before it will make an aggressive effort to find them. It is true that many Americans will have to surrender the comforting sense of their own superiority. There is nothing in past or present American history to suggest that Negroes can gain their rightful place in America without direct confrontation. But, in the words of Abraham Heschel, "So long as our society is more concerned to prevent strife than to prevent humiliation, its moral status will be depressing indeed." I have retained the faith in our society to make changes.

I am not one of those people who feel that prejudices are deep rooted and will only yield to generations and generations of education. I know better. I've seen our society change and fluctuate in its attitudes. I remember in the late 1930's Russia was an ally of Germany—we were told to hate Russia. In 1941 Russia was attacked by Germany and became our ally—we were told to love Russia and its great stalwart people. With the end of the war in 1945, Russia became our cold-war enemy—we were told to hate Russia and its Communist population. Today, with the Red Chinese threat, with a cordial meeting between Johnson and Kosygin in Glassboro, we have been told that it's important that we don't hate Russia too much. They're changing every day. They're getting more like us.

It is possible to change attitudes—it has been done.

What we must learn in this country before it is too late, and what impressed me most on my trips through Asia, Africa, and my most recent trip to Europe—where I was fortunate to have been received by Pope Paul at the Vatican—is that despite the great differences in religion, culture, physical characteristics, economic levels, and languages, man has a great deal in common. We have basically the same hopes and aspirations for our families. We all want peace. We all want education. We all want a decent job. As a world society, we have far more in common than we do by way of difference.

There is no more reason to placate. If people are not concerned about saving their consciences, they are nevertheless concerned about saving their way of life. Organizations such as the Urban League stand ready and waiting with the know-how and creativity to bring about the coalition of brain power

and mutual cooperation which will save this nation from self-destruction.

The alternatives are clear—provide the resources for prevention and rehabilitation or continue to pay a higher cost for welfare and crime. Either help the Negro become a productive consumer or he will remain a disgruntled dependent. There is absolutely no choice.

An ancient Greek scholar once asked: "When shall we achieve justice in Athens?" The answer was: "You shall achieve justice in Athens when those who are not injured are as indignant as those who are." And I say we shall achieve justice in this country when those of you who are not physically injured are as indignant as those who are.

In closing, I will use the appropriate words of Charles S. Johnson, "Basically, this is a struggle today not between North and South, or whites and Negroes, or between the international points of view. It is a struggle between those who believe in democracy and those who do not."

"To All The World . . ." Richard R. Benda

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DR EDMOND W GORDON
ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE
YESHIVA UNIV
55 FIFTH AVE
NEW YORK N Y 10003